

The Shul
at the Lubavitch Center
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December 21, 2019

VaYeshev – Chanukah – Shabbat M'vorchim

23 Kislev, 5780

New and Improved: A Chanukah Message

While walking through the supermarket recently I found that the laundry detergent, shampoo, body soap, and even paper towels that I have been using for years are now “new and improved.”

If they were fine for the last four decades, I wondered, why do they now need to be “new and improved?” And, scarier still, what was “wrong” with all these products before, products that I have now been using for the better part of my life, that they had to be remade?

And then, as if to help me get over my “paranoia,” comes Chanukah.

You see, one of the most unique aspects of the holiday and its observance, is the manner in which we light the Chanukah candles in the Menora. The Talmud teaches us that by lighting one candle on the first night, and adding another candle progressively each night until the eighth night, we are fulfilling the mitzva (commandment) in the most scrupulous and devoted way possible.

So, even though on night one, by lighting one candle, we have “raised the roof” on our Chanukah observance, when it comes to the second night, the previous day’s “top of the line” just won’t cut it. As good as the first night was, the second night must be “new and improved!” We must light two candles.

And as good as tonight might be, tomorrow must be even better.

This is a fascinating thought when taking stock of what we have accomplished, and what still lies ahead. We often feel like we have “done enough.” We are “tired,” and quite satisfied with our body of work. And, in most cases, we are well within our rights to take pride in our achievements. Yet, the Chanukah lights, like my favorite bar of soap, insist that yesterday’s “peak” must be today’s “springboard.” And that nothing less than a constantly upward climb, where every moment brings greater heights than the one preceding it, is considered “living.”

May we all be blessed with an “illuminated” Chanukah.

Let us all resolve to, like the Menora, constantly bring more and more light into the world around us.

May the increasing light of goodness and kindness symbolized by the Chanukah lights, usher in an era of prosperity and peace for the entire world. Happy Chanukah!

(by Rabbi Leibel Fajnland from <http://www.lchaimweekly.org/>)

Yaakov Had a Plan; but G-d Had a Different Plan

Yaakov sends Yosef to check on the welfare of his brothers in Shechem. Rav Gifter, z”l, makes an interesting comment on this pasuk [Bereshis 37:13]. Why was it important to mention specifically that the brothers were in Shechem? Rav Gifter suggests that Yaakov Avinu was very aware of the ill feeling between Yosef and his brothers. Yaakov wanted his children to get along with each other. That is the wish of every single parent.

However, they were not getting along. Yaakov, Rav Gifter suggests, was trying to create an environment in which the brothers would make peace between themselves. He asked himself – which spot on earth is the most fitting for my sons to find unity and solidarity? Shechem.

Shechem was the place where Shimon and Levi arose and wiped out the entire city because, “Look what you did to our sister!” They risked their lives. It was not a picnic! So why did they do it? “Because that is our sister!” They loved the family, they loved their siblings, and they loved their sister! We have a concept that “the place is causative” (haMakom Gorem) [Sotah 45a; Sanhedrin 14b, Sanhedrin 87a; Avodah Zarah 8b]. Yaakov thought that if there is any place in the world that is conducive to family unity amongst his children, it is Shechem. Since he felt that the spiritual force of that place could promote peace in the tension filled relationship of Yosef and his brothers, it was specifically there that he sent his favorite son to “check on the welfare” of his brothers.

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The only problem was that the brothers had in fact left Shechem by the time Yosef reached there. The Ramban cites an expression, "haGezeirah Emes, v'ha'charitzus sheker" – which roughly corresponds to the Yiddish expression "A mentch tracht un G-t lacht" [Man thinks and G-d laughs]. That which the Ribono shel Olam wants to happen will happen and the efforts a human being makes (to circumvent G-d's decree) will not make a difference at the end of the day. The best laid plans of mice and men come to naught if they contradict the Will of the Almighty. If the Holy One Blessed Be He wants "X" to happen, it will happen.

Yaakov's calculation had merit – Shechem would have been the place to promote brotherly love, but there was a Divine Plan at work to send Yaakov and his children to Egypt. There was no way this plan could be preempted.

(by Rabbi Yissocher Frand from Project Genesis at www.torah.org)



Thank you to **Reuven Frank** for all of his efforts that made the Rabbi Wineberg lunch event such a success.

Kol Hanaarim– Father and Son Learning – every Friday evening during the winter at 7:45 to 8:30 p.m. in The Shul. Chulent and other refreshments are served. Each session is "topped off" at the end with a fascinating story. For any questions, please see Rabbi Itzkowitz.

We extend our heartfelt sympathy and condolences to **Chazzan David Neuman** on the loss of his wife, **Celia Neuman**.

המקום ינחם אתכם בתוך שאר אבלי ציון וירושלים

Yahrzeits The Next Three Weeks:

Ethel Fischer	26 Kislev - Monday night / Tuesday	for father	Avrohom ben Moshe
Irving Hain	28 Kislev - Wednesday night / Thursday	for father	Uri ben Hechover Moshe

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DAVENING AND SHIURIM SCHEDULE

Friday, 12/20 – 22 Kislev
 Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.
 Candles — 4:28 p.m.
 Minchah / Ma'ariv — 4:25 p.m.

Shabbat, 12/21– 23 Kislev
 Shacharit – 9:00 a.m.
 Sof Z'man Kriat Shema — 9:42 a.m.
 Beitzah Gemora Shiur — 3:45 p.m.
 Minchah & Seudah Shilishit — 4:15 p.m.
 Ma'ariv — 5:30 p.m.

Sunday, 12/22 – 24 Kislev
 Shacharit — 8:00 a.m.
 Minchah / Ma'ariv — 4:35 p.m.
 First Chanukah Candle — at night

Monday, 12/23 – 25 Kislev
 Shacharit — 6:45 a.m.
 Ma'ariv — 8:15 p.m.
 Second Chanukah Candle — at night

Tuesday, 12/24– 26 Kislev
 Shacharit — 6:45 a.m.
 Ma'ariv — 8:15 p.m.
 Third Chanukah Candle — at night

Wednesday, 12/25 – 27 Kislev
 Shacharit — 8:00 a.m.
 Mincha / Ma'ariv — 4:35 p.m.
 Fourth Chanukah Candle — at night

Thursday, 12/26 – 28 Kislev
 Shacharit — 6:45 a.m.
 Ma'ariv — 8:15 p.m.
 Fifth Chanukah Candle — at night

Friday, 12/27 – 29 Kislev
 Shacharit — 6:45 a.m.
 Sixth Chanukah Candle — 4:27 p.m.
 Candles — 4:32 p.m.
 Minchah / Ma'ariv — 4:35 p.m.